



House Elections and Ethics Committee

September 28, 2021

Promote the Vote submits the below written testimony in opposition to SB 311.

**Promote the Vote Opposes SB 311 Because It Deprives Military Family Members and Other Voters Living Overseas of Equal Protection Under the Law.**

Promote the Vote supports making it easier for military and overseas voters to make their voices heard at the ballot box. Unfortunately, SB 311 treats military voters differently than other overseas voters, including the family members of military voters. Promote the Vote opposes SB 311 because it treats similarly situated voters differently.

According to the Election Assistance Commission, Michigan transmitted 27,026 ballots to UOCAVA voters for the November 2020 election.<sup>1</sup> Of those, 22,492 UOCAVA ballots were returned and 21,464 UOCAVA ballots were counted. Michigan can - and should - do better to ensure the voice of these voters is heard in our elections.

To move the state forward, Michigan should enact policies that increase the convenience and access of voting for all military and overseas voters. According to the Election Assistance Commission, the vast majority of states give all UOCAVA a short time after Election Day for their ballots to arrive and still be counted.<sup>2</sup> The following states, and the District of Columbia, provide more time for the ballots of all UOCAVA voters: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia.

Promote the Vote urges the committee to take action today to extend the deadline for UOCAVA voters to return their ballots at least one week after Election Day. Doing so is a simple, equitable solution that would serve all UOCAVA voters.

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<sup>1</sup>2020 EAVS Final Report, UOCAVA Table 3: UOCAVA Ballots Transmitted, Returned, Counted and Rejected, p. 198

([https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_library/files/2020\\_EAVS\\_Report\\_Final\\_508c.pdf](https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/document_library/files/2020_EAVS_Report_Final_508c.pdf)).

<sup>2</sup> 2020 EAVS Final Report, Policy Survey Table 5: Mail Voting Deadlines for UOCAVA and Non-UOCAVA Voters, p. 97

([https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_library/files/2020\\_EAVS\\_Report\\_Final\\_508c.pdf](https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/document_library/files/2020_EAVS_Report_Final_508c.pdf)).